

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION  
RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO : 14  
(TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025)**

**SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY IN HELICOPTER OPERATIONS FOR  
PILGRIMAGE**

14. SHRI MITHLESH KUMAR  
SHRI DEEPAK PRAKASH  
SHRI KESRIDEVSINH JHALA  
DR. KAVITA PATIDAR  
SHRI SUBHASH BARALA  
SHRI MADAN RATHORE  
SHRI BABURAM NISHAD  
SHRI BABUBHAI JESANGBHAI DESAI  
SMT MAYA NAROLIYA  
SHRI SHAMBHU SHARAN PATEL

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

- (a) the specific safety and regulatory measures implemented by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for helicopter operations in the Char Dham regions, particularly during the post-monsoon period of the 2025 pilgrimage;
- (b) the number of helipads and helicopter operators inspected, audited or approved before operations began under the new provisions;
- (c) the number of passengers transported during the resumed operations and the manner in which these arrangements have improved the reliability and safety; and
- (d) whether Government plans to replicate such safety-enhanced helicopter connectivity models in other inaccessible pilgrimages or remote areas of the country?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION**

(Shri Murlidhar Mohol)

- (a): The following additional safety measures were implemented by stakeholders including DGCA for helicopter operations during the post-monsoon phase of the Char Dham Yatra to enhance operational safety:
- (i) Additional familiarisation flights for all pilots operating in the sector for the first

time or resuming operations after a break of more than one year.

(ii) Operationalisation of Control Rooms at Sahastradhara Helipad (Dehradun) and Sitapur (Kedarnath), manned by an Officer-in-Charge from UCADA, responsible for issuing go/no-go decisions based on real-time assessment of weather and traffic conditions.

(iii) Deployment of one ATC officer and one IMD officer at each Control Room to ensure effective R/T communication with helicopters in flight and continuous dissemination of critical weather information.

(iv) Installation of additional weather cameras along the Char Dham and Kedarnath routes to strengthen weather monitoring and reporting.

(b): A total of six helicopter operators operating from seven helipads were inspected/audited by DGCA before granting permission for the commencement of operations to Kedarnath.

For Char Dham operations, DGCA inspected/audited 12 operators and 10 helipads prior to granting operational approval.

(c): The total number of passengers transported during the post-monsoon season is as under:

Sector	Passengers Up	Passengers Down
Kedarnath	27,812	27,489
Char Dham	3,675	3,614

The operations were conducted in a safe and well-planned manner, and the additional safety measures instituted by DGCA played a significant role in ensuring safe operations.

(d): Yes, DGCA intends to replicate these safety measures in all Yatra and remote-area helicopter operations. Operations Circular 02 of 2023 (Helicopter Pilgrimage Yatra Operations) has been suitably amended, making these measures applicable for all Yatra operations.

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